



Legislation Text

File #: 24-0760, **Version:** 1

Office of Wildfire Preparedness and Resilience, a Division of the Chief Administrative Office, recommending the Board:

- 1) In accordance with Chapter 3.13, Section 3.13.030(B) of County Ordinance Code, Contracting Out, find that the services needed to provide environmental and historical preservation reviews for the Weber Creek Project requires specialty skills, qualifications, expertise, and technology not available within current County classifications;
- 2) Award Request for Proposal (RFP) 24-918-021 to EMC Planning Group, Inc. for the Weber Creek Environmental Hazard Review;
- 3) Approve and authorize the Board Chair to sign Agreement 8717 with EMC Planning Group, Inc. for the Weber Creek Project environmental and historical preservation review services for a term of three years upon final execution and a total amount of \$192,137.01; and
- 4) Authorize the Purchasing Agent to execute any necessary amendments relating to Agreement 8717, excluding term extensions and increases to the not-to-exceed amount, contingent upon approval by County Counsel and Risk Management.

FUNDING: Federal Emergency Management Agency Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Funds (90%), California Wildfire Mitigation Program Joint Powers Authority Funds (5%), and General Fund County Match (5%).

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND

On July 25, 2023, the Office of Wildfire Preparedness and Resilience (OWPR) received notification from FEMA that Phase I of the Weber Creek Project (Project), a pilot project funded under the California Wildfire Mitigation Program (CWMP) aiming to reduce the impacts from natural disasters, such as wildfire, through implementing a series of defensible space and home hardening retrofit measures, was approved in the amount of \$1,404,532.50. The remaining grant funds totaling approximately \$23 million for Phase II of the Project will be awarded by FEMA upon the successful completion of the Phase I activities, including programmatic review and Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) approval.

Under this CWMP Project, OWPR will be responsible for managing a program to perform these defensible space and home hardening retrofit measures at no cost to the homeowner for existing residential homes in the Project area, which is an area identified with high risk of fire severity and is located within a wildland-urban interface area. This Project area includes parcels both within and outside the limits of the City of Placerville spanning approximately 850 acres and containing a total of 525 homes.

As a preliminary requirement for this Project, the County must perform environmental clearance work to ensure compliance with federal and state environmental regulations, including the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106. The purpose of this work is to identify and document any possible environmental impacts as a result from the proposed wildfire mitigation activities within the Project area and specific properties with regard to biological, archaeological, architectural, and historic

impacts.

On January 3, 2024, the Chief Administrative Office, Procurement and Contracts Division, on behalf of OWPR, initiated Request for Proposals (RFP) 24-918-021 for the Weber Creek Environmental Hazard Review. Following the evaluation of proposals received, OWPR selected EMC Planning Group, Inc. as the successful proposer and began working to finalize the scope of work and Agreement.

Under the proposed Agreement, the consultant will be tasked with first completing the environmental review of the previously identified 160 No-Issue parcels for which the proposed program measures may have little to no environmental impact. The consultant will then evaluate the remaining parcels in the Project area that require an in-depth environmental review, including any flagged parcels from the No-Issue parcel list. For both phases of this scope of work, consultant will work with OWPR staff to coordinate review and approval from FEMA in order to have all Project parcels cleared and ready to move on to Phase II of the grant program.

In addition to the EHP work to be completed under the proposed Agreement, Phase I of the Project is also anticipated to include work by OWPR staff to conduct public outreach efforts to engage and educate homeowners within the Project area about the program, assist homeowners with the application process to ensure eligibility criteria is met and applications are submitted, perform home assessments to identify the appropriate defensible space and home hardening retrofit measures for each property based on risks and exposures, and develop defensible space and home hardening scopes of work for each property. Phase I activities are estimated to be completed prior to the end of 2024.

ALTERNATIVES

The Board could choose not to approve the proposed Agreement 8717 and direct staff to evaluate other options; however, this would result in a delay in staff's ability to implement this grant Project and complete Phase I activities by the February 2025 deadline.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION

The Board has previously taken the following actions related to this grant program and the Weber Creek Project:

- 22-0491 - On March 22, 2022, as part of a presentation and conceptual approval of OWPR, the Board approved and designated \$3,375,000 of excess contingency funds to be used as the local matching funds for the Weber Creek Project under the original application for this grant project under FEMA's HMGP.
- 23-1568 - On August 29, 2023, the Board accepted a grant award under the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for the Weber Creek Project, Phase I, in the amount of \$1,404,532.50 for a term of June 28, 2023 to June 27, 2026.
- 23-1571 - On August 29, 2023, the Board adopted and endorsed the Wildfire Strategy, which included the award of the Phase 1 California Wildfire Mitigation Program Weber Creek Project.

OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

County Counsel and Procurement and Contracts.

CAO RECOMMENDATION / COMMENTS

Approve as recommended.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no increase to Net County Cost associated with the approval of this Agreement. Funding for the Weber Creek Project has been included in the Fiscal Year 2023-24 Budget and has been included in the Fiscal Year 2024-25 Recommended Budget. Reimbursement for Project expenses, including this Agreement, will be provided by FEMA on a quarterly basis.

CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

Obtain the Board Chair's signature on one (1) copy of Agreement 8717 and return to CAO Fiscal, attention Kelley Lawrie.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT

N/A

CONTACT

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Office of Wildfire Preparedness and Resilience